

CHRISTIANITY
and INDUSTRY

WILLIAM ADAMS BROWN

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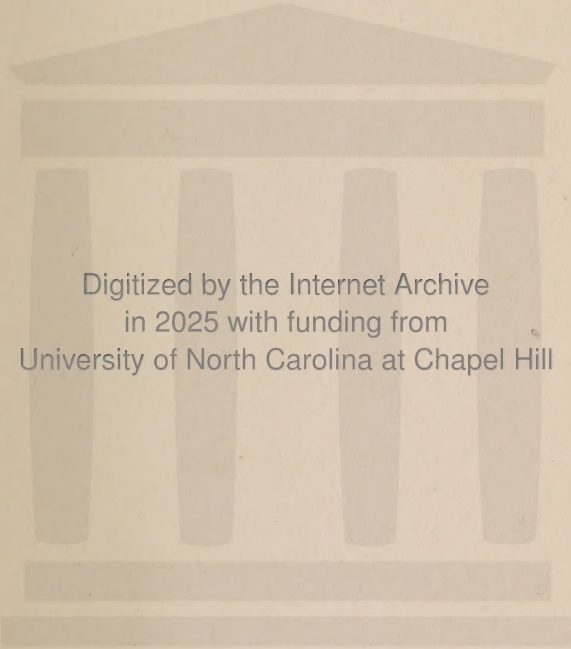
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CHRISTIANITY AND INDUSTRY

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ADDRESSES GIVEN TO A GROUP
OF INDUSTRIAL SECRETARIES
OF THE YOUNG WOMEN'S
CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

BY

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NEW YORK
THE WOMANS PRESS
1919

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NATIONAL BOARD OF THE YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN
ASSOCIATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NEW YORK

FOREWORD

IT is regarded as essential in the training courses given for the preparation of the industrial secretaries of the Young Women's Christian Association, that the Christian faith shall be interpreted to them as a working basis for the practical task which they have before them.

It is not only the actual program which must be carried out but the spirit and the motive compelling such a program with which our industrial leaders must be imbued. We believe that an understanding of the Christian faith must first be the possession of such leaders and that then they must be exponents of its spirit in all of their contacts.

Dr. William Adams Brown was asked to make such an interpretation to one of the industrial training groups, and delivered the following series of lectures before them. We are greatly indebted to him for this pres-

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FOREWORD

entation, which we are glad to make available to all who are concerned in the religious thinking which must undergird the industrial program of the Young Women's Christian Association.

FLORENCE SIMMS

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Christianity and Industry

I

CHRISTIANITY'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE INDUSTRIAL PROBLEM

A NUMBER of years ago a six-year-old boy addressed to his mother the following request: "Mother, I want you to give me something. I want you to give me an explanation of the world, and mother, I want it thorough."

This is the way I felt when I was told of the theme which had been assigned to me in this conference — Christianity and the Ethics of Industry and of Industrial Organization.

The man who could explain this could explain the world, and it is evident from the note with which the request was accompanied that, like the small boy to whom I have referred, you want your explanation thorough.

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For this is what it said: "Really what we want you to do is to make a statement of our Christian faith which makes it sufficient for the present time. This will include, of course, Christianity's program relating to industrial righteousness."

Now, I cannot qualify under any such prospectus. The industrial problem is a highly complicated one. It involves matters of technical knowledge possible only to an expert, as well as a thorough mastery of the general principles of economics and finance, to which I can make no claim. If you expect me to suggest to you any short cut that will relieve you of the necessity of fighting your way through this tangled maze out into the clear light of a consistent and comprehensive social program, I must disillusion you at the start.

The thing I hope to do is more modest, but at the same time more fundamental. It is to remind you how being a Christian can help the men and women in our factories, mills, mines and ship yards, who must together solve the industrial problem, if it is to be solved at all.

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For at the heart of every technical problem there is a human problem. Those who engage in any form of work are men and women with certain needs and aspirations and experiences which they share with men and women everywhere. And it is because it speaks to these common needs, satisfies these common aspirations and voices these common experiences that Christianity has a message to men in any particular calling.

This was brought vividly to my consciousness through an experience on the lower East Side. Some years ago I used to go often to the Labor Temple and address large audiences of East Side working people on fundamental problems of the moral and spiritual life, and I found, to my surprise, that the questions that interested them and the problems of which they sought solution were the very same problems with which I was dealing with my own students in the classroom at the Union Theological Seminary. What reason have we for believing that there is a good God in control? Why, if there be such a God, do we see such things as are going on in Russia and in the sweat-shops of our own country? How

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can the church expect the working people to trust its claim to be their friend when it is so indifferent to their needs and so unsympathetic with their aspirations? How can the principles of Jesus be translated into the social life of our time, and what place, if any, in this translation, has all that gigantic expenditure of time and money that goes into what is conventionally called religion? Such were the questions about which these thoughtful East-siders were thinking, and they are the questions about which thoughtful men and women are thinking everywhere.

If, therefore, I am to help you at all in your approach to the special problems you face as industrial secretaries of the Young Women's Christian Association, it will be by helping you to a firmer grasp of the principles which have proved their validity through the ages, and making it easier for you to translate these into simple human terms so that the men and women with whom you deal can understand them and appreciate their relevancy to their own lives.

Our task, then, must be to show the human significance of Christianity. But "Christian-

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ity" is itself a word capable of many different interpretations. What do we mean by this Christian religion of which we make profession? Surely not the sum total of all that goes by that name. That great nation against whom we have been fighting for all that we hold most dear claims to be Christian and makes its appeal to the Christian God. Torquemada sent his victims to the rack at the time of the Inquisition in the name of the Christian religion. If we are to make progress in our thinking we must discriminate. By Christianity, for the purpose of the present discussion, I shall understand the religion that owes its inspiration to Jesus and makes his character and purpose its test of thought, feeling and action. It is not merely the religion which *starts* from Jesus, but the religion which makes Him *standard*, and that all along the line: standard for thought, thinking of God and man and life and destiny as He thought of them; standard for conduct, acting for the purposes that were dear to his heart; and above all, standard for the inner life, feeling as He felt about the sacredness of human life, the glorious possibilities latent

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in each human individual, and the unspeakable tragedy of the loss of one human soul.

It is of what such a Christianity as this may mean for the men and women who are at grips with the industrial problem that I would think with you to-day. I know that it is hard to visualize it clearly and to disentangle it from the corrupting alliances in which it is involved. You will not find it anywhere in its purity. It is a fact, to be sure; indeed, it is the fact of facts, but it is at the same time an ideal. It is something in the making. It is a thing like character; it is a thing like democracy. It is something which is even now stirring in the hearts of men and moving in the life of nations, as part of the great forward and upward movement of the race. It uses organization and machinery, to be sure, but it is not exhausted by them; indeed, they are often a hampering influence from which it has to struggle to free itself.

You do not love your country less because of the selfishness of politicians and the empty verbiage of political platforms. You do not despair of this great imperial city because it has its Tammany Hall. You will not, if you

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are wise, lose faith in Christianity or in the church which is its organ of expression because it too has its narrow-minded ecclesiastics and carries on with it in its onward sweep toward the better future a mass of débris gathered from other sources that sully the purity of its waters and discredit the crystal source from which it claims to come. You will value it all the more because it is not yet all that it promises to become, or that your faith and courage may help to make it.

If, then, we are to show how Christianity ministers to human need, we must first make sure that we realize what true Christianity is, and how it is to be distinguished from rival claimants to the name.

II

CHRISTIANITY, THE RELIGION OF PERSONALITY

LAST SUMMER I gave a course of lectures in Christianity as God's answer to the permanent needs of mankind. One by one we passed these needs in review, the need of guidance, the need of security, the need of inspiration, the need of comradeship, the need of worship. And we saw that Christianity has an answer for each. It has an answer to the need for guidance in the Bible, that wonderful book that gathers up within itself the story of the race's experience of God's dealings with man. It has its answer to man's need for security in the cross, that symbol which expresses the solidarity of mankind in the most baffling and universal of all human experiences, and shows how suffering itself may be transformed into an instrument for good by a love that believes in man enough to be willing to suffer for his sake. It has

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its answer to man's need for inspiration in the Christ, that unique personality in whom men of all races and all ages have found their ideal and to whose summons those respond who are deaf to every cry which comes from one another. It has its answer to the need for comradeship in the church, that ancient society which in spite of all its imperfections is committed more completely than any other human institution to the ideal of a universal society and embodies in its traditions memories of aspiration and self-sacrifice that go back to the birth of the race. Finally, it has its answer to man's need for worship in that living God who has given all these gifts and in fellowship with whom, even in the midst of imperfection and strife, we hold communion with the Eternal and experience the realized ideal.

But after all, all these varied needs of guidance, of security, of inspiration, of comradeship, of worship, and many more which there is not time here to catalogue, are phases of a deeper and more fundamental need — the need for a full and complete expression of personality. If Christianity is to conquer

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the world it must satisfy this need. It must help men to realize to the full what it is in them to be, and it must do this all along the line.

I have spoken of man's need for a full and complete expression of personality. That is what we mean — at least that is one thing that we mean — by that much-abused word “democracy,” of which we hear so much in our day. A democrat is one who believes that the attainment and expression of personality is the supreme goal of human endeavor, and that every man and woman has it in him to become a personality. Christianity, in the sense in which we have defined it, is the religion of democracy because it is based upon this conviction. It has learned from its Master that the goal of humanity is a society of persons, and that it must be realized through motives which are personal.

III

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A PERSON IN THE CHRISTIAN SENSE

BUT personality needs to be defined. A person is not an isolated individual. He is an individual in relations. A person is a creator and a sharer; one who finds himself in others and realizes himself through others.

This is the meaning of that great Christian ideal of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is Jesus's way of defining the goal of personality. It is a society united by common faith, inspired by common motives, working for common ends. It is a society that includes individuals of many different kinds, in widely varying capacities, fulfilling very different functions; but every one of them holds his indispensable place, does what he does for the benefit of all the rest, is recognized by all the rest as doing the thing that no one else can do, and finds the joy of his life

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in the consciousness that he is rendering this indispensable service.

It is one of the tragedies of history that this essentially democratic ideal should have been so sadly perverted. How often in the history of Christianity the two elements which are united in Jesus's ideal of the Kingdom have been separated, the individual contribution and the common task. Imperialism dies hard, as we are learning to-day to our cost, and the old word which Jesus wrested from the kingdoms of the past to rebaptize into a larger and more generous meaning has been again and again reinterpreted in the spirit of the older ideal. / We have seen the social ideal of Christianity which, to Jesus, was the fulfilment of personality, used for its enslavement. / Ultramontanism is an example in point. The modern German religion of the State is another. Jesus trusted the human soul and believed in its ability, through free response to the ideal, to realize a universal brotherhood. Imperialism denies this possibility. It restores the autocratic ideal; it bids us despair of the possibility of a social order based on freedom; it imposes upon

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Jesus an ideal of messiahship, for refusal to accept which during his lifetime He was sent to the cross.

In the second place personality is an ethical conception. It takes for granted a standard to be realized through the establishment of right relationships. It is concerned with such matters as truth, justice and love.

This is recognized by Christianity in its conception of sin. All religions agree that sin is against God. They differ in their conception of what God requires. Christianity tells us that he requires faith, that is to say, that trust in God and in our fellowmen which is the essential prerequisite of social unity. The fundamental sin, for the Christian, is selfishness, the confining of one's interest to the needs and desires of the individual. The fundamental virtue is love, the out-reaching of the will by which one individual lays hold upon another and finds in that other the fulfilment of his own life-end. The way of salvation is faith, that trust in the undiscovered possibilities of personality which makes this out-reaching of the individual in love ethically right. That is what our fathers

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meant when they said that we are justified by faith rather than works. Underlying all that we do, giving our acts meaning and value, is an attitude of the will which determines our relation to other persons. This attitude for the Christian is faith, and without it all that we do will be of no avail.

But in the third place personality is a religious conception, and by that I mean that it is one which is rooted in the nature of things. We can therefore count on its lasting. Personality is an ideal that will not wear out. People are made to be persons, and when we treat them as such we may be sure that in time they will respond to our appeal.

This is what Jesus means when He speaks of God as Father. What does the fatherhood of God mean? It means that this great ideal of democracy about which we have been talking, whose meaning we have tried to unveil, is not something that has come to pass through the agreement of isolated human wills, as Rousseau conceived his social contract. It is not a *mere* ideal fathered in the brain of some poet or preacher who could not be satisfied with the limitations of life

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as experience has revealed them to hard-headed men. It is something that is inwrought into the very nature of things. It is something to which we are led by the course of evolution itself. We did not will to be persons. We discovered that we are persons, and in discovering this we discovered also that larger, older, more comprehensive and all-embracing personality in and through whom we live and move and have our being, whom religion calls God. All men have believed in God in the sense of a unifying and controlling power. Imperialism conceives that power as a sovereign imposing his will from without by force. Christianity conceives him as a Father appealing to that which is within, drawing upon the hidden reserves of personality as a parent draws out the undeveloped possibilities of his child. And because Christianity so thinks of God and so interprets man's relation to him, Christianity may rightfully claim to be the religion of democracy.

And finally, personality is a vital conception. This is only to say over again in other words what we have said before about Christianity, that it is not an accomplished

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fact, but a potentiality. We are not yet persons, but we are becoming persons. Personality is the goal after which we strive.

Here is where our contemporary democracy needs correction. Like all young things it is in too much of a hurry. It mistakes possibility for fact, it treats what is to be as if it already were. It puts upon men and women who have not as yet waked up to the meaning of personality, tasks which can be realized only by those who have attained it through discipline. We see an extreme example of this confusion in Russia. The Bolsheviki, so far as they are sincere, and not mere tools of Germany, have overlooked the fundamental law of life, which is growth. Unlike our premillenarians who are willing to wait for the millennium for at least a few months or years, they insist upon having it to-day. They say to the man who is destined to rule some day, You are fit to rule now, and like every other philosophy which is founded on a lie, or on that half truth which is even worse than a lie, their power is destined to fall, as every system which ignores the truth is bound sooner or later to fall.

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We see now the great significance of Jesus for the Christian religion. He is not only the source from which it springs; he defines the goal to which its followers aspire. Jesus shows us the kind of person that you and I ought to be, that you and I may become. Jesus fills up our thought of God with the kind of content that gives it drawing power for free individuals. Jesus is the leader, under whose influence generation after generation has broken away from the forms and traditions inherited from the past and gained the impulse to new expression and new development of its own. Not back to Jesus is the message of the Christian religion, but forward with Jesus to the goal which He has set.

And as Jesus defines the goal to which we are tending, so also He defines the method through which that goal is to be realized. It is a method of freedom which makes appeal to that which is within. It is a method of experiment which involves risk of mistake. It is a method of cooperation which requires mutual understanding and sacrifice.

This explains the central place which the cross holds in the Christian religion, for the

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cross is the most signal illustration of what follows when the method of freedom is consistently applied in a world which is not fully ripe to receive it. The cross is not simply a fact, though it is a fact the most stupendous and awe-inspiring in history. It is a law of life valid for man as for God. The cross is the price which he must pay who stakes his all on trust in man before man has shown himself worthy to be trusted. It is the expression of a forward-looking love — a love that is born of faith in that which is yet to be, a love so venturesome that for the sake of securing the redemption of the sinner it is willing to share the consequences of his sin. We get a clue to the meaning of the cross as we read the letters that Monsieur Barrès has collected in his "Faith of France," letters that reveal to us the spirit of those young men of many names and creeds who for the sake of the new world to be have freely given their all in the world that now is. But we do not fully measure all that the cross means to the Christian until we perceive that among the men for whom Jesus gave his life were the very men who took it. It was not simply

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for those who believed in his cause that Jesus went to his death, but for the sake of those who were yet to believe in it in the days to come. And democracy, in the great sense in which we have been speaking of it here, will not be an accomplished fact until it can win to its allegiance, through the indissoluble bond of inner conviction, the very men and women who are now its most irreconcilable opponents.

If we have been right in our interpretation, it would appear that the distinctive Christian doctrines can be rightly understood only when they are considered as so many different aspects of the religion of personality. This is true even of that most puzzling and recondite of them all, which has so largely lost its meaning to the men of our generation. I mean the doctrine of the Trinity. In this doctrine we express our faith that God, like everything that is alive, cannot be compressed into any single or simple mode of expression. He is not simply the mysterious power from which all things proceed, the unknown end toward which all things are tending; not simply the one who reveals his will with ever-increasing clearness through prophet and seer — most

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of all in that incomparable teacher whose character bodies forth in visible form the goal toward which mankind is being led; but He is furthermore the recreating and transforming Spirit whose inner witness to the soul brings light out of darkness, overcomes evil with good, and on whose vitalizing power alone depends our hope of the coming of a society which shall be at once united and free.

IV

THE PERSONAL ELEMENT IN INDUSTRY

SO much for the first half of our subject, which is Christianity. Now, as to its application to your work as industrial secretaries. How far and in what way can you bring the principles we have thus briefly outlined to bear upon the lives of the women in industry to whose service you are committed?

Four questions suggest themselves as guide, to this part of our inquiry: 1) as to your field; 2) as to your audience; 3) as to your equipment; 4) as to your spirit.

First, then, as to your field. We have defined Christianity as the religion of personality. We have now to ask what Christianity so defined has to do with industry. At what points does it touch the special interests of the group of human beings with whom you

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are primarily concerned? I answer, at every point. Take any individual question you please — the question of wages, the question of hours of labor, of sanitation, of housing, the question of organization and control, and it is easy to show that in the last analysis it is a question of personality and therefore the proper sphere for the application of Christian principles.

Take, for example, the question of wages. On its face this seems simply a question of dollars and cents, so much money for so much work, but we are coming to see that this is a very shallow and superficial interpretation of the matter. Money is a symbol of the whole range of values through which the personal life is realized. Money is power, we say, and it is power, but it is much more. Money is health. Money is beauty. Money is friendship. Money is knowledge. Money brings freedom from care. Money means — at least it may mean — home and school and hospitality. It means insurance against disaster. It means a chance to influence other lives for good.

A few days ago I was talking with an Italian

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barber, and I asked him where he lived. He said he lived in the upper Eighties between Second and Third Avenues. "I can get cheaper rooms," he said, "over by First Avenue, but I don't want to do it, because I don't like the people who live there. I want my children to have good company. I don't want to be rich." There was a case where money meant friendship. One of my acquaintances told me of a conversation she had recently had with a shoemaker to whom she had taken a pair of shoes to be repaired. He also was an Italian and he asked her a very high price. When she remonstrated he looked up at her and said, "Why shouldn't I charge you this price? I like to go to the opera as much as you." Here was a case where money meant beauty.

All these things are involved, at least they may be involved, in the struggle for a living wage. We must understand this spiritual meaning and sympathize with it. But we must understand, too, that where this spiritual meaning is absent, the struggle for higher wages may degenerate into a mere contest for the means of self-indulgence or of tyranny.

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Money is opportunity. It is a chance to be realized, but like every misused chance, it may spell deterioration and defeat.

Or, take the question of hours. This, too, is at bottom a question of personality. Work properly regulated humanizes, but if you work a man to excess you brutalize him. To make a self you must have leisure; but what room is there for leisure in a twelve-hour day and a seven-day week?

Years ago I spent some weeks in the University Settlement in New York City. My room was in the front part of the building. It looked out at a tenement just across the way where a tailor was doing piece work in a sweat shop. The window where he sat was opposite to my window. Every morning when I woke up I would look out and see him already at his work. Every night when I went to bed I would look across and see him still at his monotonous task. No matter how early I got up, no matter how late I went to bed, I was never so early nor so late but he was there. What chance was there in such a life for the development of a normal personality? One may quarrel with the arith-

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metic of the eight-hour day; one disputes its underlying philosophy at his peril.

What is true of the hours of labor is equally true of the conditions under which labor is performed. Unsanitary workrooms, or work under a foreman who speeds the gang beyond the limits of normal healthful activity; monotonous repetition of the same task without reference to the end which it is designed to serve, — all these have effects upon the morale of the worker that have portentous social consequences. To try to realize the political ideal of democracy while we leave these fundamental economic conditions unchanged, is to involve ourselves in a contradiction of terms. Somehow if work is to be what it should and to do what it ought we must recover again the lost unity of industry. We must see our work as a whole; we must restore the creative element without which personality languishes.

And this leads to a larger and more difficult question still, the question of control. How shall we give the worker a stake in the industry to which he contributes? This too is a question of personality, and unless we realize

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this we shall make small progress in dealing with the vexed questions which meet us in connection with the contest between capital and organized labor, and in scarcely less acute form, in the contest between organized labor and the unorganized groups which have not yet learned their solidarity with one another. How can you realize unity without tyranny? How can you share responsibility without impairing efficiency? These are problems of industry because they are problems of democracy, and the key to the solution of one group of problems will prove to be the key to the solution of the other.

What that key is, I repeat again, I do not profess to be able to tell you. Very likely there is no one key that will unlock all doors in industry any more than there is one key that will unlock all doors in the simplest home. To find the key that will open this door or that must be the work of the man or the woman who must live in the room into which the door opens. Some keys are in the hands of bankers, and some of foremen, and some are in the hands of inventors, and some of labor leaders, some are in the hands of states-

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men and some of professors, and some of plain men and women, the pooling of whose experience as they bear upon the common task can alone give us the solution we need. We may not ourselves possess the key that will open any door. But one thing we can do. We can tell the difference between a door that is shut and a door that is open, and we can help to create the atmosphere that will make men wish to live in a home where doors open freely from one room to another. To find what we want may be hard, but there is slight chance of finding what one does not want. As Christians it is our business to make people want to be persons and to live with other persons the lives that persons should live.

V

WHOM TO ENLIST IN THE SOLUTION OF INDUSTRIAL PROBLEMS

FROM the field we turn to the audience, the people with whom we are to work and with whom we wish to share our ideals. Who are they?

They fall into three groups: first of all, the workers themselves, the women in industry who are doing the routine tasks at the machine or at the desk; secondly, the employers who are responsible for the conduct of the industry, and especially the people who are directly charged with carrying out their policy, so far as it affects the well-being of the employees; and finally, the men and women in our churches who represent the cross section of public opinion which furnishes the moral environment in which the complex problems which are involved in the relationship of these two groups must be worked out.

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Here are three groups, with all of whom you will be brought into more or less intimate relationship. You must interpret them to one another, by helping them to see the issues which divide them in their human, and that means, in the last analysis, in their Christian, relations.

But for this you must translate your problem from general into particular terms. You must see the issues we have tried to describe in their bearing upon the lives of specific men and women.

This is true of each of the groups to be considered. You must understand the women with whom you are to work. You must enter into their lives, you must appreciate their difficulties; you must sympathize with their aspirations, but at the same time, you must understand the limitations which prevent them from realizing their own ideal. I am not thinking here simply of the limitations of their environment for which they are not responsible, but of the limitations of knowledge and of character which they can surmount if they will. You must show them that if they are to attain the goal of their desires in

WHOM TO ENLIST

greater power and leisure and influence, they must make themselves worthy of this increased responsibility by discipline. You must persuade them that you are there to help them to this larger life by every means in your power.

You must understand the position of the employers, the complicated and many-sided responsibilities which they carry, the difficulties which they face in dealing with large numbers of men and women who are untrained and irresponsible. You must understand the pressure of the demand for dividends not simply from the point of view of those who are seeking for profits, but as a means of keeping the industry itself on a paying basis and so insuring the continuance of steady employment and wages for those who depend upon it for their livelihood. You must understand the difference between the man who can leave when he will, and the man who must stick to his job whether others leave or not, and you must use the knowledge thus gained on both sides to remove preventable causes of friction and bring the persons who must together work out the right solution face to face.

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But you will make small progress in this endeavor without the help of the larger public whose opinion and sentiments create the moral environment which will in the long run determine the right solution of the questions at issue. The men and women who make up this public opinion are found in large measure in the Christian church. If you can gain their help you will succeed. Without them you are almost certain to fail.

It is one of the unfortunate features of the present situation that there should be so wide a gulf in this country between the responsible leaders of the labor movement and the church. In England the contact between the two groups is exceedingly close. The best known labor leaders have been trained in the Christian church and are, many of them, active in its counsels. The movement as a whole is permeated with a profoundly religious spirit and phrases its ideals in terms which are taken from the Christian Scriptures. But in this country there is no such close contact, and the possibility of misunderstanding and friction is correspondingly increased. It should be your effort in every

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possible way to bridge the gap, to interpret to the men and the women in the churches whom you can touch, the aspirations of the forward-looking women in the labor movement, and vice versa. You must show the workers that the ideal which inspires the churches is a human ideal, and therefore their concern, and conversely you must show the church people that the ideal which inspires the labor movement is a religious ideal and that the motives to which it appeals are motives which find their most signal reinforcement in the Gospel.

You will not do this, I repeat, by beginning with definite programs, economic or political. Those will follow in due time. You will do it by establishing personal contacts, by bringing individual men and women whom you may be able to touch in the church into touch with the lives of the men and women whom you have come to know in the great industries in which you are at work. In the common effort to remedy admitted evils and to remove the causes which have produced them you will establish that new moral fellowship, indispensable for success in larger things.

VI

HELPS WITH WHICH CHRISTIANITY FURNISHES THE INDUSTRIAL SECRETARY

WHAT are your assets in this attempt to mobilize the forces of the community for constructive service? That is our third question. First of all, human nature itself, with its great reserves of power, aspiration and sympathy, to which Christianity appeals and on which, under the vivifying touch of the divine Spirit, it must rely. Then the capital of human experience stored up from the past, and the fund of good will waiting to be mobilized in the present. For Christians the last two are symbolized by the Bible and the church.

We begin with the Bible. This is our first and chief asset, but to use it aright we must know what it is. What is the Bible? Not simply a miraculous book let down from heaven to tell us without any trouble to ourselves what

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we ought to believe and what we ought to do. It is the book of humanity. It is the story of man's upward rise through struggle and failure to that great ideal of a free society which we have already tried to describe. It is not simply the story of struggle but of attainment. It records man's experience with God and with his fellowman as under the urge of the divine Spirit he has passed beyond the narrow confines of the tribe and of the nation to the world-wide sympathies of the Kingdom of God. Above all it is the book of the ideal. It shows us what we still have to do before we reach the goal. And in the persons of prophet and apostle and above all of the great Master of them all it takes us into the confidence of the forward-looking men by whose example we are inspired to press forward toward the better future which lies ahead.

And yet how many there are who do not know this book, people in the church no less than people outside, people who read the Bible as well as those who never open its pages.

Some months ago I attended a conference

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of Christian workers at Blue Ridge. After a heavy day's work I made my way out into the woods that cover the hillsides by which the valley is framed, for a few quiet moments of thought before the evening's address. As I walked slowly, enjoying the beauty of the scene and the quiet of the silent woods, I saw a man coming toward me whose leisurely gait suggested that he was there for a similar purpose. I said to him as we met: "I see, like myself, you have stolen away to get a moment of quiet." "Yes," he answered, "there are ten of us together in my tent." And then he went on: "I have been having a most wonderful experience since I have been here. I have been discovering the Bible. I am a doctor," he added apologetically. "You know we doctors don't have much use for the Bible. We think it is the preacher's book and leave it to him, but I have been finding out in the three weeks of my stay here that it is a book that belongs to us too and I cannot tell you what it has meant to me."

The man who said this was a Christian, and his words showed he had been brought up

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to believe in the Bible and to reverence it as God's book, but somehow he had never made it his own because he had never realized it in its human significance as a book of universal experience. Am I wrong in thinking that he is typical of multitudes of people who for lack of knowledge are losing out of their lives an asset of incalculable importance? It is our privilege to help them to this discovery. Whatever else we may know or leave unknown, we must know the Bible, that we may be able to interpret its present message to the men and women for whom it is meant.

You will not think that in thus emphasizing the human aspect of the Bible I am at all undervaluing its significance as a revelation from God. Unless we see in the Bible more than a mere record of human experiences, unless we realize that it is the story of the way in which men have discovered something greater than themselves, an unseen Friend who reveals to them unsuspected meanings in human life, and whose searching Spirit answering to deeps in themselves of which they had been unaware, challenges their spirit and summons their will to new endeavor, we shall

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not find in it the help we need. No mere readjustment of competing social interests can give us the better social order that we need. It is with the mortar of ideals that social institutions are welded into stability, and God is the name that religion gives to the realized social ideal. But we find God — and this is the point which I want to make with all the clearness that I can command — we find God in the full Christian sense not outside of man but in and through man, drawing us through human ideals, interpreting Himself through human lives, incarnating Himself in the Man of men who gives us the model of what all men may be. It is the story of this miracle of God in man that the Bible tells.

Less easy to define than the Bible, more in need of interpretation in its ideal aspects and possibilities, is the church. What is the church? I have said that it symbolizes the forces of good will waiting to be mobilized for service in the present. That at least is the aspect of the church that most concerns us here. The church is not simply a divine institution made once for all in the remote

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past and handed down to the present by an unchanging tradition. It is a company of men and women organized and equipped to render present service. It is committed by its very constitution to the cultivation of the unselfish life. It has taken for its field of activity the whole world.

It is quite true that it has not realized its own ideal. Like every other social force of age-long history and world-wide proportions, it is marred by imperfections and selfishness. Nevertheless the ideal is there, and when it is understood in its full significance it can be made an asset of incalculable importance for the great ends we have at heart. But here too we must understand before we can use aright, and this is not easy. We must know the past out of which the church has come, the obstacles its leaders have had to overcome, the battles they have had to fight. We must know the meaning of its symbols and of its ritual, not in their literal sense as archaeology interprets them, speaking to us in the language of a by-gone day that awakens no echo in our hearts, but as they appear to those who have lived themselves into their meaning and

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love them as symbols of vital human experiences which they too share. We must know the church as it appears to us in its greatest leaders and its own most devoted sons and daughters. We must know it as Mazzini knew Italy, and Lincoln, America. We must judge the church in the spirit in which intelligent and patriotic citizens judge the nation, in the light of its undeveloped possibilities and the great resources of spiritual power waiting to be released by the leader who can speak the enfranchising word. We must think of the church as we think of our country; we must love the church as we love our country; we must know the church as we must know our country if we are to render our country the service it has a right to ask.

It is not an easy thing to do, for this church of which we have been speaking is an intangible thing. I have compared it to the nation, but the comparison is not wholly apt. To understand the present position of the church we should have to go back to those early days before the national constitution when there were only states, but no United States. Yet even then the nation existed in the com-

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mon spirit that inspired our fathers when they made their Declaration of Independence, and fought the Revolution, and set up the national government. So to-day we see only churches: Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, Episcopalian, Congregational and the like, and no one of them seems great enough to command the whole-hearted allegiance that we wish to give. Yet the church is here as a great spiritual fact, feeling its way after a better life, conscious of common ideals and purposes, cherishing a common heritage, following a common leader. We touch it in the foreign missionary movement, that most characteristic and daring expression of the internationalism of Christianity. We touch it in the new home missions movement, with its reemphasis upon the church's obligation to Christianize America as a whole, East as well as West, city and country alike. We see it in the social service movement, voicing itself in such utterances as The Social Creed of the Churches, and the more recent Declarations of the Archbishops' Committee of Inquiry on Christianity and Industrial Problems, and the still more radical declaration of

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the Canadian Methodists. Above all, we see it in the movement for church unity in all its varied forms, whether that ideal be conceived in terms of organic union or of such an effective federation of all Christian forces as shall express to the world their unity of mind and purpose. In all these we see evidences of a common spirit feeling its way after a suitable form through which to express itself. It is this unseen spiritual reality on which we must lay hold, the soul within the body, the spirit that inspires common action.

It is particularly appropriate to say this word to you who are to be secretaries of the Young Women's Christian Association. For the Association is the daughter of the church and in the long run will stand or fall with the success or failure of the church. In a very peculiar sense you Association secretaries ought to be ambassadors of the church, interpreters of what it means to the life of the groups now estranged from it, to whom in its name you have been sent out to minister. I know you will often find it hard to do this. You will feel the pressure of the church's conservatism, of its narrowness, of its lack of

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adaptability to the new conditions. You will be tempted to break away from the limitations its membership imposes upon you in order to gain a larger freedom. But remember that to do this is to surrender the ideal of social unity which is our only hope for the future. Be your judgment of the church favorable or unfavorable, it is a part of human society which must somehow be Christianized and unified and organized and made effective for constructive and helpful service. Measure it by any standard you please and you will find it difficult to overestimate its importance. Think of its magnitude with its millions of communicant members of every land and race. Think of its history reaching back into the past and gathering up so much that is precious in the life of the race. Think of its potentiality as the one institution committed by its constitution to a program of world-wide service, to the training of men and women and children for the tasks of good will. Here surely is an agency which you cannot afford to neglect. It is your business so to live and work as to make this great engine effective for good.

VII

THE SPIRIT IN WHICH TO ATTEMPT A CHRISTIAN SOLUTION OF INDUSTRIAL PROBLEMS

SO much, then, for field, audience and equipment. A word in conclusion as to the spirit in which we must address ourselves to our task.

Four qualities at least we must bring to our enterprise, if we are to succeed. We must be humble, we must be patient, we must be hopeful, we must be whole-hearted.

In the first place, we must be humble. We are trying to persuade people to undertake the greatest and the most difficult of all possible enterprises, the establishment of the ideal human society, and we who are asking other people to do so hard a thing are young people at the beginning of our own life's work. If we are to persuade others we must set the example ourselves. We must practice what we preach, and for this we need long

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preparation and discipline. To advise others one must have knowledge, sympathy, unselfishness and above all, common sense. But these are gifts which only time can give. While one is a beginner, modesty is the only becoming attitude.

And may I say just a single word to those who, like myself, come to the practical work of the church from the background of a college atmosphere. The greatest danger of our colleges to-day is the academic spirit. By the academic spirit I mean a certain love of abstractions and of big words. As students it is our business to theorize, and theory always involves artificial simplification. We confuse our own formulae with the vital driving forces of which they are symbols, with the result that men who know the real world by long contact with its responsibilities look upon us as unpractical if not positively obstructive.

I suppose that this emphasis upon the abstract is inevitable, but it is none the less unfortunate. Science is a sort of shorthand, unintelligible unless interpreted. Each specialist has his technical vocabulary, a jargon

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meaningless to those outside his own profession. We theologians are sinners like the rest. We have taken the simple human truths of the Gospel and clothed them in language so technical and scholastic as often to conceal even from ourselves their bearing upon the common life of man. We have made our profession the affair of a privileged class and must not be surprised if men have taken us at our word. But in this we are doing, after all, only what all the specialists are doing, the lawyers and the doctors and the political economists and the psychologists and the sociologists, quite as much as the rest. When I am tempted to despair of my own profession because of the abstractness of our terminology and the scholasticism of our speech, I am reestablished in my own self-respect by a moment's contact with the vocabulary of my colleagues in other callings.

But however we may laugh at these things among ourselves they become serious when we go out and try to translate our convictions into their equivalents in human lives. Here abstractions will not do. Everything human is concrete, and the question that each of us

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must be asking himself over and over again, when we come out of this academic atmosphere and begin to put our theories into practice, is, how does the principle in which we believe, or the ideal we wish to promote, bear upon the life of the particular man or woman or child for whom we are now most immediately responsible?

And this leads me to my second point, that we must add to our humility, patience. The enterprise upon which we are engaged is a social enterprise, and that means that we must work through others, and that always takes time. Social progress is in the last analysis a matter of education: education of the mind to see things that ought to be done; education of the feelings to desire them; education of the will to act; but above all, education of the whole man in that composite human attitude that we call faith, without which no social progress is possible. We must have faith not only in the people we like, but in the people we do not like; not only in the people in whom we believe, but in the people in whom we disbelieve. We are not going to get our ideal social order by abolishing the type of

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people with whom we do not agree, or converting them to our own views. To the end of time the conservative will have his place with the radical in the social order, and each has his contribution to make to social progress. The conservative is the critic who tests new plans to see whether they will work. He is the anchor that holds in time of storm. He is the tail of the kite. He is one of the people who make up your parish. You have got to carry him with you in your plans, and that will take patience. When you have hit upon something on which you can persuade men of different types to agree, you may be reasonably sure that you are right.

But, in the third place, we need hope. Patience does not mean acquiescence in things as they are. You can be patient with a good conscience only if you are sure that in the end you are going to win. This note of encouragement is one which it was never more important to strike than to-day when men and women everywhere are feeling war-weariness and are tempted to slip back insensibly into the old ways. We need it in the nation where to-day there are so many people who are

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trying to persuade us that the great tide of idealism that so recently swept over us and lifted us above ourselves to new heights of which we had not dreamed, was all an illusion; that when we said we believed in democracy and wanted a new world order we were saying what was not true and what in our secret hearts we knew was not true. We need to reassure our own souls as to the meaning of what has happened to us and the nation during the war and to realize that if we can only present as great a cause and sound as clear and compelling a note of moral leadership in the new tasks of peace, the same resources are still available for us to-day as were available when we were at war.

We need this note of encouragement in the church. Here we have made great progress in understanding and sympathy. The war has taught us how to work together and, working together, we have come to feel and think together. If there were time, I could give you many illustrations. Let me be content with a single word. I will take the General War Time Commission of the Churches. This is a committee of one hundred persons,

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called into existence by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, in order to bring together the different Protestant forces who were engaged in different forms of war work. The committee includes men and women, representatives of different churches and of both the Christian Associations, officials of Home Boards and members of Social Service Commissions. While financed by the different cooperating bodies it has a common executive and a common treasury and has carried on throughout the war on behalf of the church as a whole a work of interpretation and of ministry which it would have been impossible for any of its constituent bodies to do alone. Here surely we have made a gain that we cannot afford to lose. Somehow we must continue under the new and more perplexing conditions which peace has brought the cooperation so happily begun in war. And for this we must keep alive in our own hearts the spirit of hope and of confidence. We must not let temporary failure or superficial discouragement shake our faith in the spiritual resources at our disposal or weaken our confidence that right will conquer in the end.

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And finally and last of all, we must be whole-hearted. There is nothing that unifies life and releases energy like complete surrender to a dominating ideal. And what ideal can be more compelling than that to which our religion commits us! We are working to make the world a more human and brotherly place, a fit home for children of the wise, the righteous and the loving God. In such a business there can be no half-hearted service. It must be all or nothing. Unless we can see in each least thing we do a part of a larger whole, unless we can feel in loneliest hours the support of an unseen companionship, unless we can carry into our contacts with each humblest man or woman the consciousness of resources of divine power waiting to be used in the renewal and transformation of life, we may do many useful and important things — the supreme thing will elude us.

